



New York State Education Department  
Office of Special Education  
**Educational Partnership**





# Where Special Education Services are Provided:

## Understanding Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) For Families and Caregivers

Developed collaboratively by the Technical Assistance Partnerships (TAPs) for Academics, Behavior, Equity and Transition



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# Disclaimer

The resources shown are designed to provide helpful information. Resources are provided for instructional use purposes only and do not constitute NYSED endorsement of any vendor, author, or other sources. To the best of our knowledge, the resources provided are true and complete.

# Today's Facilitators

# Introductions

- Name
- Role
- District
- School
- Population Served

# Training Objectives

- What is LRE?
  - Participants will be able to explain what LRE means
- Meaningful Access to General Education: Inclusive Environments
  - Participants will describe the goal of special education - preparing students for living, learning, and earning
- Your Role in Meetings
  - Participants will learn skills for participating in LRE discussions at the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) meeting and Committee on Special Education (CSE)
- Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development
  - Participants will identify opportunities within the IEP development process to ask questions about LRE and special education programs and services

# Meeting Norms

- Take care of your needs (water, food, restroom, etc.)
- Speak your truth – Use “I” statements
- Ask what you need to understand and contribute
- Listen with respect
- Push your growing edge
- Participate and struggle together
- Expect and accept a lack of closure
- Respect each others’ needs and learning styles

# Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities



## Self-Advocacy

Students engage in self-advocacy and are involved in determining their own educational goals and plan.



## Family Partnership

Parents, and other family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child.



## Specially-Designed Instruction

Teachers design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide students with disabilities with access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.



## Research-Based Instruction

Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities.



## Multi-tiered Support

Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.



## Inclusive Activities

Schools provide high-quality inclusive programs and activities.



## Transition Support

Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.



# Materials

- Participant Packet
- Handouts
  - LRE for Families
  - LRE Terms to Know
  - LRE Family Resources

# Slide Marker Icons

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# Activity 1: Reflection

## Participant Packet

**Special education is a service, not a place.**



# LRE Definition

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What does placement mean?



# LRE Placement



The placement of an individual student with a disability in the LRE must:

- provide the special education needed by the student;
- provide for education of the student to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the student with other students who do not have disabilities; and
- be as close as possible to the student's home.

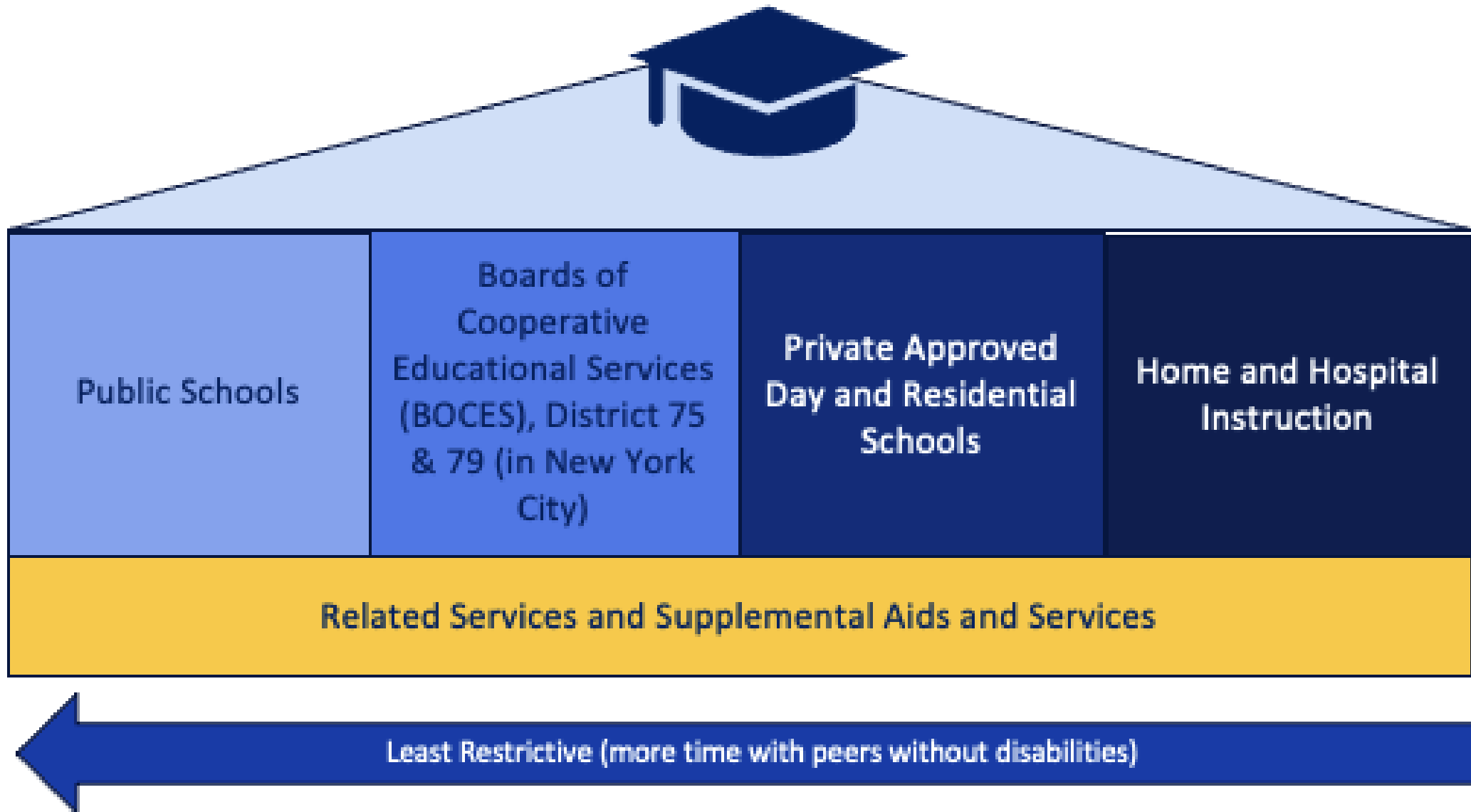
*Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, Section 200.1 (cc)*

# What Does LRE Mean for My Child?

- Students who receive special education services should be in the same classrooms as their nondisabled peers as much as possible.
- LRE is not a place - it is a principle that guides the placement decision of a student's education program.
- The LRE for each student may look different because their special education needs are unique.



# Placement: Least to Most Restrictive Settings



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# Meaningful Access to General Education





# Inclusive Classrooms

## Meaningful Access



“I believe the role of education should be to minimize the impact of disability and maximize the opportunities for children with disabilities to participate in general education in their natural community.”

Hehir (2010)

# What the Research Tells Us

## Why Inclusion?

- Students with disabilities make strong progress in many areas when included in general education classrooms
- Evidence-based instructional strategies benefit all learners
- More time spent in general education leads to better life outcomes



# Benefits of Inclusion for Students With Disabilities

- Higher scores on math and reading tests
- More friends and stronger communication skills
- Stronger social and emotional skills
- Fewer referrals for disruptive behavior
- Fewer absences from school
- Better outcomes after high school

# Benefits of Inclusion for Students Without Disabilities

- Positive academic, developmental, social, and attitudinal outcomes
- Greater compassion and empathy
- Positive perception of children with disabilities
- Stronger understanding of diversity and disability
- Increased social skills, such as communication and cooperation, and fewer problem behaviors

# What Does LRE Mean to You?



# Activity 2: Reflection

## Participant Packet

**What questions might you ask during the CPSE/CSE meeting based on your reflection from the video?**



# Your Role in Meetings

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# Working Together

## School and Home Partnership

“Clearly, parents and schools working together to minimize disability and maximize participation provide the greatest hope for a bright future.”





# Every CPSE/CSE meeting includes a decision about LRE

- Initial Placement
- Annual Review
- Amendments
- Re-evaluation



# Engagement in Meetings

## Effective Ways to Communicate

Parents and Caregivers can contribute by:

- Sharing your unique knowledge and understanding of your child
- Asking questions
  - to clarify the process
  - to understand placement decisions
  - to define what accommodations, modifications and/or services will be provided to support your child
- Requesting to see a placement/setting
- Sharing any progress you have observed and supports that are working for your child

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# IEP Development

Programs and Services



# The IEP is Where Placement is Recorded

## LRE Decisions:

- ✓ are based on strengths, needs, and goals of each child
- ✓ are **not** made based on a disability category
- ✓ consider benefits and any possible negative or harmful effects of each placement
- ✓ **must begin discussion with appropriate supports (supplementary aids, related services) to maintain a child's placement in general education settings**

# Recommendations Shall:

“Be developed in conformity with the LRE provisions of the Part:

- placement shall be based on a student’s IEP and determined at least annually;
- placement shall be as close as possible to the student’s home, and unless the student’s IEP requires some other arrangement, the student shall be educated in the school he or she would have attended if not disabled;
- in selecting the least restrictive environment, consideration must be given to any potential harmful effect on the student or on the quality of services that he or she needs; and
- a student with a disability must not be removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed ***modifications in the general education curriculum.***”

# LRE and Development of the IEP



• What are my child's current levels of academic and functional performance?

• What are my child's educational needs? What skills or behaviors do they need to learn?

• What goals will help my child learn the skills or behaviors they need to make meaningful educational progress?

• What services, including supplementary aids and services will the school provide to help my child accomplish these goals?

• What is the placement in the LRE where those services will be provided

# Important Terms to Know

## Considerations for Program and Service Decisions

**Continuum of Services** - The variety of services provided to students, e.g., related services, resource room, special class.

**Continuum of Placement** - What type of school the student attends, e.g., public school, neighboring district, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES).

**LRE** - The extent to which services are provided to the students with a disability in settings with nondisabled peers.

# Special Education Programs and Services



## §200.4(d)(2)(v)(a)

The recommended program and services that will be provided to the student:

- To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals;
- To be involved and progress in the general education curriculum and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and
- To be educated and participate with other students with disabilities and nondisabled students.





# Special Education Program/Services

- Consultant teacher services
- Integrated co-teaching
- Resource room
- Special class
- Related services

# What Help Can My Child Receive?

**Supplementary aids and services:** These are supports your child might need in the classroom, like a note-taker, preferential seating, or help from a paraprofessional.

**Program modifications:** Changes to the way lessons are taught or assignments are given, so your child can participate and learn.

**Accommodations:** Adjustments to how your child learns or shows what they know, such as extended time on tests or using a computer to write.

**Assistive Technology:** Any tool, device, or piece of equipment—big or small—that helps a child with a disability participate in the classroom learning.

# Integrating Related Services into the General Education Classroom

## Benefits for Student

- Classroom activities are not missed
- More opportunities for skill practice in the natural environment
- Therapist can monitor the effectiveness of strategies
- Fosters social acceptance, self-esteem, and social skills
- Teachers can apply strategies after seeing them implemented by therapist

# Closing Reflection



## LRE Considerations

How might your learning from today impact your interaction with school personnel around LRE in the areas of:

- Meaningful access for your child to the general education curriculum
- Your role in CPSE/CSE and IEP meetings
- Your input in the development of your child's IEP



# Questions and Answers



# Other Educational Partnership Trainings You Might Want to Attend:

- Special Education 101: Training of the Parent Member
- What is an IEP for Families of Preschool Students
- What is an IEP for Families of School-Age Students
- Early Intervention (EI) to CPSE for Families
- CPSE to CSE for Families
- Student Involvement in the IEP for Families
- IEP for Families
- Specially Designed Instruction (SDI): A Guide for Families/Caregivers

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New York State  
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**Educational Partnership**

Technical Assistance Partnership  
for Academics



New York State Education Department  
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for Equity



New York State Education Department  
Office of Special Education  
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Technical Assistance Partnership  
for Behavior

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# Meeting Evaluation Survey

[Link here](#)





# Preschool Special Education Program/Services



- Related Services Only
- Special Education Itinerant Services (SEIS)
- Related Services in combination with SEIS
- Special Class in an Integrated Setting (SCIS)
- Special Class